

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 to 11, 13 to 16, 18 to 23, 25 to 29, 31 to 34, and 36 to 40 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 11, 16, 20, 23, 29, 34 and 38 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3 to 16, 18 to 23, 25 to 34, and 36 to 40 were rejected under 35. U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gasser et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,224,163) in view of Chang et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,157,953). As shown above, Applicants have amended the independent claims to define the invention with greater clarity. In view of these amendments, withdrawal of the art rejection is respectfully requested.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a method that includes receiving, from a delegator, a designation of a role and a delegate to assume the role; receiving, from a credential service provider, an indication that the designation is valid; generating a delegation credential in response to receiving the indication; receiving a request from the delegate for access to a service; providing the delegation credential in response to the request; sending the delegation credential to a verification service that compares the selected delegation credential to permissible delegation credentials for the delegate; and generating a report via the verification service regarding usage of the delegation credential by the delegate.

Neither the Gasser or Chang references, when taken alone or in combination, are understood to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claim 1, particularly with respect to generating a report via the verification service regarding usage of the delegation credential by the delegate.

Gasser describes a system for delegating to workstations the ability to access files on behalf of an user using “delegation certificates.” The delegation certificates are signed by the user’s smart card, and subsequently, sent to the appropriate work station. Chang relates to securing access for a service manager. The service manager provides services to “host service computers” which are connected in a network. It also controls “an authenticator” which compares an user identifier and password against a list of user identifiers and passwords stored in persistent memory. Nowhere does the Gasser or Chang references disclose or suggest generating a report via the verification service regarding usage of the delegation credential by the delegate.

For at least the foregoing reasons Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Gassar and Chang.

Independent claims 11, 23 and 29 contain features that are similar to those of claim 1, e.g., sending the delegation credential to a verification service that compares the selected delegation credential to permissible delegation credentials for the delegate. These claims are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons noted above.

Amended independent claim 16 defines a method that includes receiving, from a delegate, a value corresponding to a confirmation code and an identifier, where the confirmation code and the identifier correspond to a delegator, and the confirmation code is generated by a Web site visited by the delegate. The method also includes identifying the delegator using at least one of the identifier and the confirmation code; assigning, to the delegate, a delegation credential that corresponds to the delegator; and sending a message to the delegator indicating that the delegation credential has been assigned.

As previously argued by Applicants in the Reply to Final Office Action of February 17, 2004, the Gasser and Chang references, when taken alone or in combination, are not understood to disclose or suggest receiving a confirmation code from a delegate, which is generated by a Web site visited by the delegate, and using the confirmation code to identify the delegate. This feature is neither addressed in the Office Action nor found in the cited art. If the Examiner persists in his rejection, he is respectfully requested to cite a reference showing this feature. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 16 is believed to be patentable over the art.

Amended independent claims 20, 34 and 38 contain limitations that are similar to claim 16, e.g., receiving a confirmation code from a delegate, which is generated by a Web site visited by the delegate, and using the confirmation code to identify the delegate. These claims are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons noted above.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Each of the dependent claims is also believed to define patentable features of the invention. Each dependent claim partakes of the novelty of its corresponding independent claim and, as such, has not been discussed specifically herein.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or

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other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney can be reached at the address shown below. All telephone calls should be directed to the undersigned at 617-368-2158.

Please apply any fees or credits due in this case, which are not already covered by check, to Deposit Account 06-1050 referencing Attorney Docket No. 10559-505001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 9/28/004

  
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